

MMM--HELLO...?

HONEY?

...HI, RIMA...  
G'MORNING...

YOU'RE NOT  
UP YET?



MMM...NO,  
NOT YET...  
DIDJA LEAVE  
SOMETHING  
OR...?

DAVE--

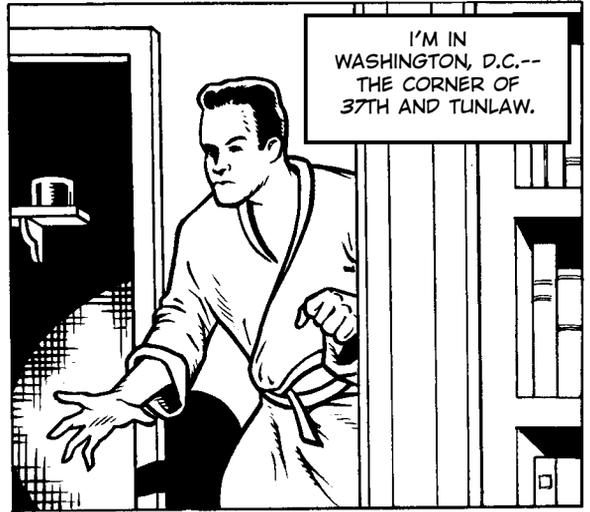


PLANES HAVE HIT  
THE WORLD  
TRADE CENTER.

THE PENTAGON'S  
BEEN HIT, TOO.



SEPTEMBER ELEVENTH,  
TWO-THOUSAND ONE.



I'M IN  
WASHINGTON, D.C.--  
THE CORNER OF  
37TH AND TUNLAW.



I'M IN THE  
GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY  
ENGLISH MASTER'S PROGRAM.

I'M IN A 5-MILE RADIUS  
FROM THE PENTAGON--  
3 MILES FROM THE WHITE HOUSE.



I'M IN HORROR.

KINGDOM

## "ALABASTER CITIES"

STORY BY A. DAVID LEWIS - LETTERING BY DAN COONEY  
ART BY EVAN QUIRING & DARREN MERINUK, DAN COONEY & PETER PALMIOTTI,  
AND JASON NARVAEZ & JASON MARTIN



KATIE COURIC, TOM BROKAW,  
AND MATT LAUER  
FILL MY EARS.

--REPORTING THAT TWO  
PLANES HAVE STRUCK  
THE WORLD TRADE  
CENTER BUILDINGS  
IN NEW YORK--



--THE PENTAGON, STRUCK  
BY WHAT SEEMS TO BE A  
PLANE AS WELL--

--ENTIRE FINANCIAL  
DISTRICT. TRADING HAS  
BEEN SUSPENDED--

WHEN I WAS LIVING IN  
FENWAY, I USED TO WATCH  
THE TODAY SHOW  
EVERY MORNING.

I SOMEHOW DOUBT  
I'LL BE SEEING AL ROKER  
THIS MORNING.



--THE MOST HORRIBLE  
STRIKE ON AMERICAN  
SOIL, OUTSIDE OF  
PEARL HARBOR, SINCE  
THE WAR OF 1812--

SOMETHING I WOULD WATCH  
AT THE THEATERS BACK IN  
FRAMINGHAM OR AT THE COPLEY.

IT'S LIKE...  
SOMETHING OUT  
OF A MOVIE.

--MAY ALSO BE  
HIJACKED FLIGHTS--

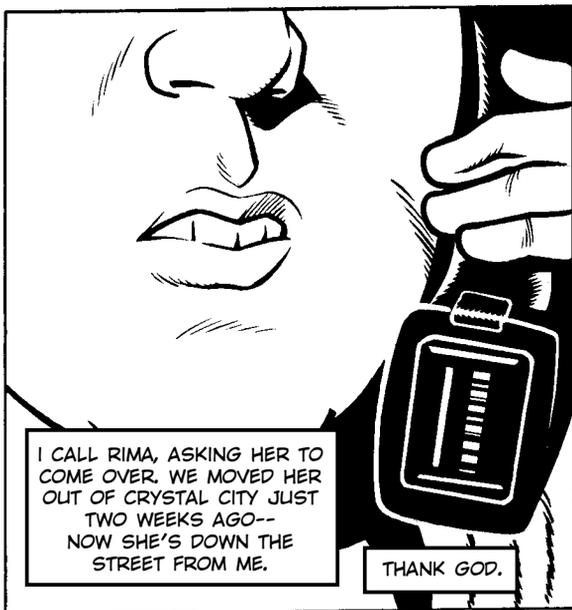
--OKLAHOMA CITY OR  
WORLD TRADE CENTER  
BOMBING--



--AMERICAN FLIGHT  
TO L.A. ORIGINATING  
FROM BOSTON--

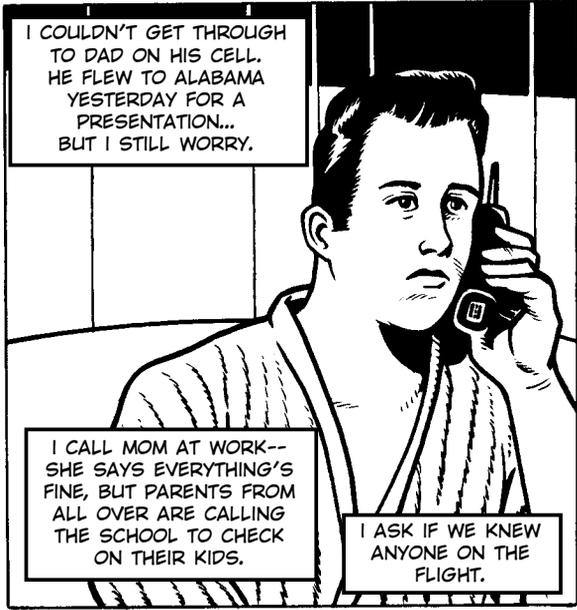


HOME.



I CALL RIMA, ASKING HER TO COME OVER. WE MOVED HER OUT OF CRYSTAL CITY JUST TWO WEEKS AGO-- NOW SHE'S DOWN THE STREET FROM ME.

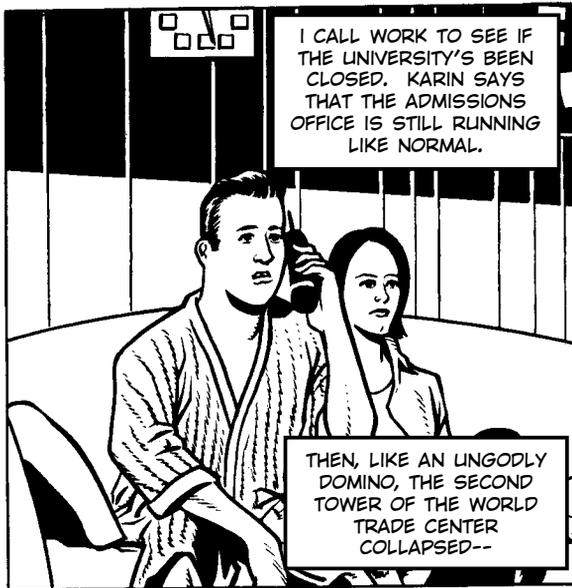
THANK GOD.



I COULDN'T GET THROUGH TO DAD ON HIS CELL. HE FLEW TO ALABAMA YESTERDAY FOR A PRESENTATION... BUT I STILL WORRY.

I CALL MOM AT WORK-- SHE SAYS EVERYTHING'S FINE, BUT PARENTS FROM ALL OVER ARE CALLING THE SCHOOL TO CHECK ON THEIR KIDS.

I ASK IF WE KNEW ANYONE ON THE FLIGHT.



I CALL WORK TO SEE IF THE UNIVERSITY'S BEEN CLOSED. KARIN SAYS THAT THE ADMISSIONS OFFICE IS STILL RUNNING LIKE NORMAL.

THEN, LIKE AN UNGODLY DOMINO, THE SECOND TOWER OF THE WORLD TRADE CENTER COLLAPSED--



10:28 AM, SEPTEMBER 11TH, 2001.



WE WATCHED IT...LIVE. FIENDISHLY IRONIC, REALLY, SINCE THE DESTRUCTION HAD EVERYTHING TO DO WITH THE LOSS OF LIFE.

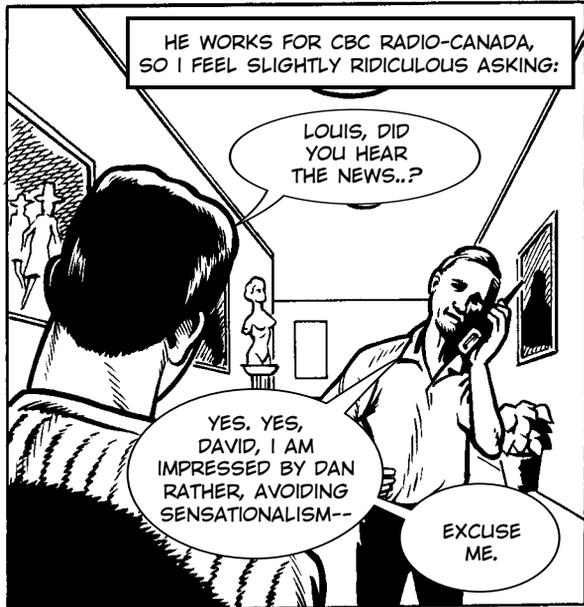
I HAVE BEEN TO NEW YORK FOUR TIMES IN MY LIFE. DID BROADWAY, ELLIS ISLAND, THE STATUE OF LIBERTY... NEVER DID THE TWIN TOWERS.

KARIN CALLS TO SAY THAT THE UNIVERSITY IS SHUTTING DOWN IN AN HOUR.



LOUIS?

MY LANDLORD SHUFFLES AROUND BUSILY UPSTAIRS.

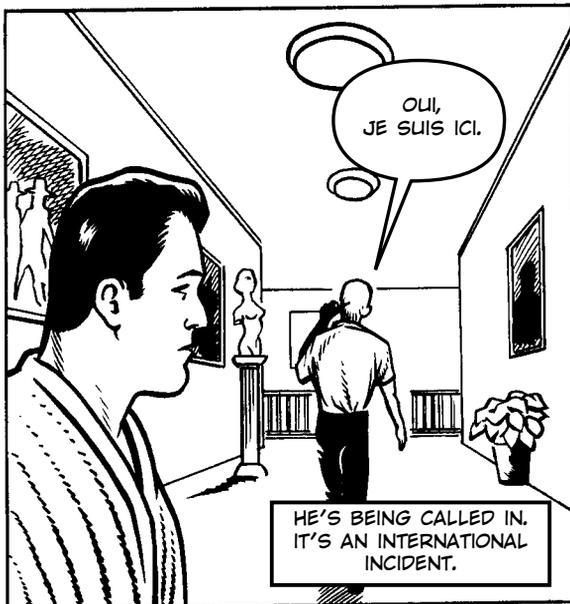


HE WORKS FOR CBC RADIO-CANADA, SO I FEEL SLIGHTLY RIDICULOUS ASKING:

LOUIS, DID YOU HEAR THE NEWS...?

YES, YES, DAVID, I AM IMPRESSED BY DAN RATHER, AVOIDING SENSATIONALISM--

EXCUSE ME.



OUI, JE SUIS ICI.

HE'S BEING CALLED IN. IT'S AN INTERNATIONAL INCIDENT.



THE WORLD BANK SUMMIT WAS GOING TO HAPPEN IN THREE WEEKS. THE INTERNATIONAL COMIC ARTS FESTIVAL WAS GOING TO HAPPEN ON THURSDAY.

THE CAR BOMB REPORT AT THE STATE DEPARTMENT WAS BOGUS.

#%\$- I STILL CAN'T GET THROUGH.

NOW ALL BETS ARE OFF.



SORRY. I'M JUST WORRIED ABOUT MY FRIENDS IN NEW YORK. THEY WORK IN THE FINANCIAL DISTRICT.

I REASSURE HER THAT THEY'RE PROBABLY FINE. THE TELEVISION DOESN'T OFFER US MUCH SUPPORT, THOUGH.



WE'VE BEEN HIJACKED INTO A SAUDI ARABIA. A WORLD UNDER SIEGE.

RIMA WAS RAISED IN SAUDI ARABIA. SHE LIVED THERE DURING THE GULF WAR. I ASK HER IF THIS IS WHAT IT FELT LIKE.

...NO. YOUR WINDOWS AREN'T RATTLING. THERE AREN'T MISSILES FLYING OVERHEAD.

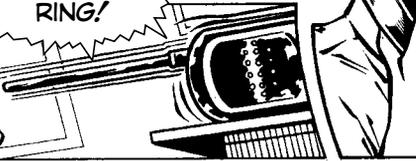
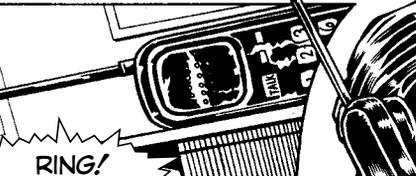
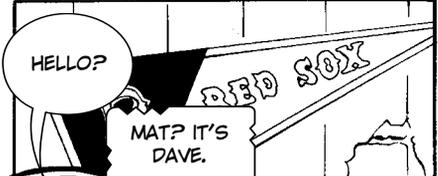
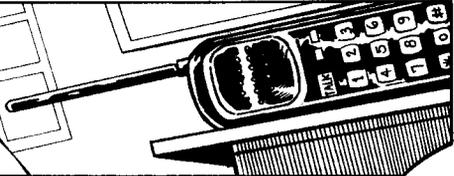
WAR IS WORSE.

THINGS CONTINUE TO GET CRAZY. THE NETWORKS LOSE CONNECTION AFTER CONNECTION TO THEIR ON-THE-SCENE REPORTERS. BUSH IS DIVERTED AWAY FROM D.C., SENT TO LOUISIANA. MUSELIMS, MONUMENTS, AND SCHOOLS ARE ALL CLOSED THROUGHOUT THE DISTRICT.



A FOURTH HIJACKED PLANE CRASHLANDS IN SOMERSET COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA.

IT'S CHAOS. EVEN THE "LAW OF THREES" IS BROKEN--



RING!  
RING!

HELLO?

MAT? IT'S DAVE.

DAVE, HI, YOU'VE-- YOU'VE HEARD, YEAH?

YEAH... YEAH...

ARE YOU GUYS, Y'KNOW, OKAY?

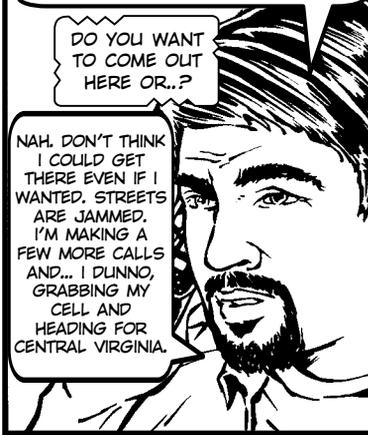
YEAH, MAN... I WAS FIVE MINUTES FROM CALLING YOU. I SPOKE WITH JOSH. THEY'RE SENDING HIM HOME FROM WORK. I TRIED REACHING SOME PEOPLE IN NEW YORK. CELLS ARE NO GOOD, BUT I GOT TO ERIC UPTOWN. HE SAYS THEY'RE PRETTY UNAFFECTED.



THIS, THOUGH...AMERICA'S GOING TO GO NUTS. TO GET HIT LIKE THIS--AT HOME, IN TWO PLACES. EVERYONE'S GOING TO WANT TO GO AFTER THESE GUYS.

DO YOU WANT TO COME OUT HERE OR..?

NAH. DON'T THINK I COULD GET THERE EVEN IF I WANTED. STREETS ARE JAMMED. I'M MAKING A FEW MORE CALLS AND... I DUNNO, GRABBING MY CELL AND HEADING FOR CENTRAL VIRGINIA.



WHAT'RE YOU GOING TO DO?

RIMA AND I ARE STICKING TOGETHER. SHE'S ALREADY HEADED BACK TO HER PLACE. --WANTED TO BE THERE IN CASE A.U. SENDS HER ROOMMATE HOME EARLY.

I'M FOLLOWING IN A COUPLE OF MINUTES. OUR PLACES ARE PRETTY HIGH UP. I THINK WE'LL BE FINE.

I'M LYING, BUT I DON'T WANT TO SOUND PANICKY. BUT ALL I CAN THINK IS:

"I LIVE IN WASHINGTON, D.C. THIS IS WHERE THEY'LL STRIKE."



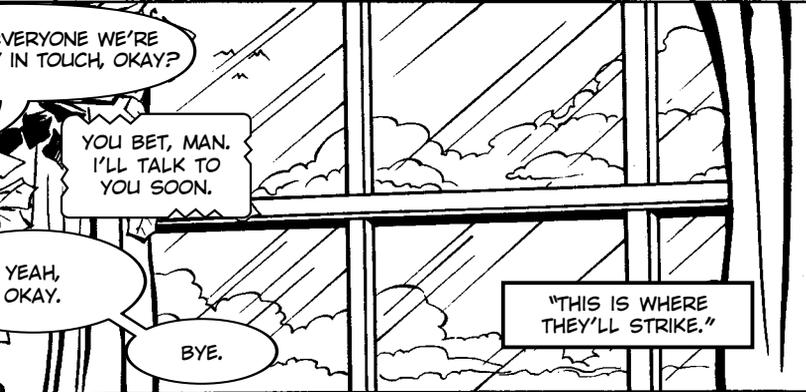
JUST...TELL EVERYONE WE'RE FINE. AND STAY IN TOUCH, OKAY?

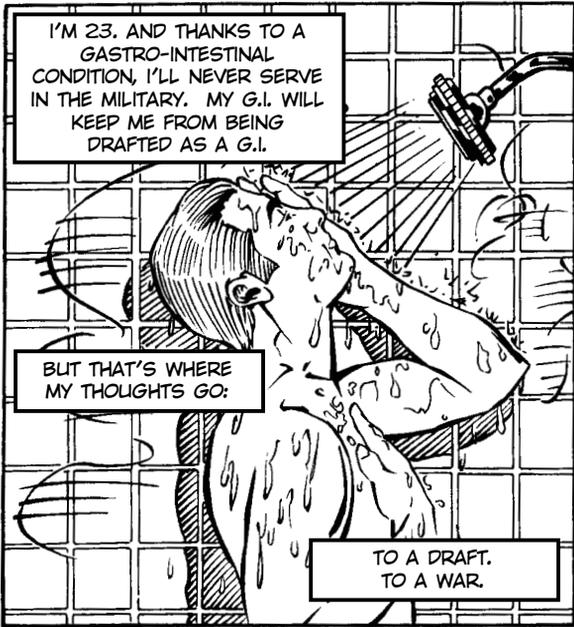
YOU BET, MAN. I'LL TALK TO YOU SOON.

YEAH, OKAY.

BYE.

"THIS IS WHERE THEY'LL STRIKE."

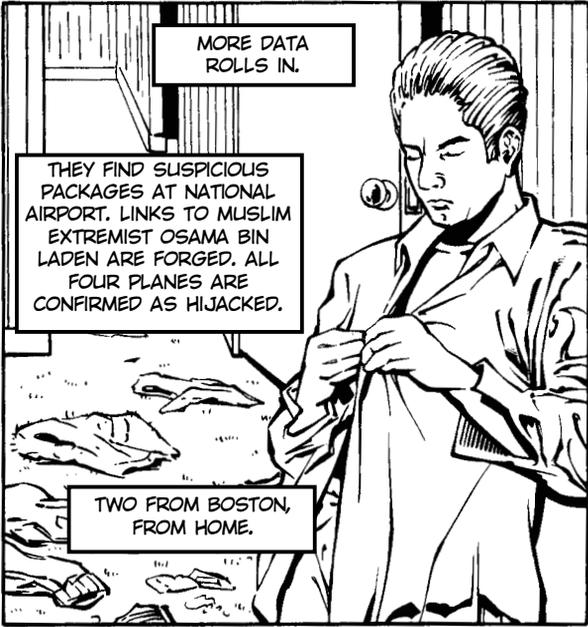




I'M 23. AND THANKS TO A GASTRO-INTESTINAL CONDITION, I'LL NEVER SERVE IN THE MILITARY. MY G.I. WILL KEEP ME FROM BEING DRAFTED AS A G.I.

BUT THAT'S WHERE MY THOUGHTS GO:

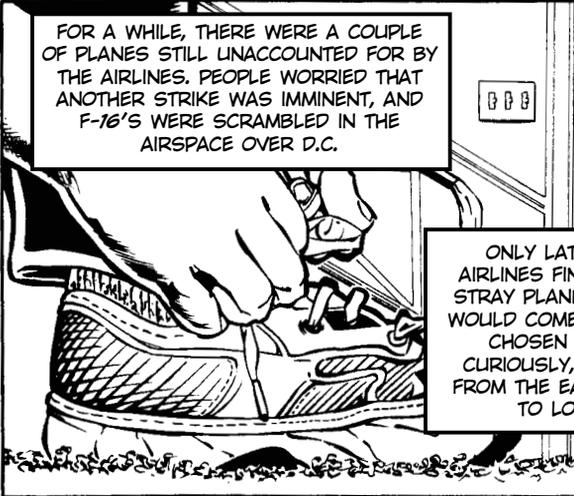
TO A DRAFT. TO A WAR.



MORE DATA ROLLS IN.

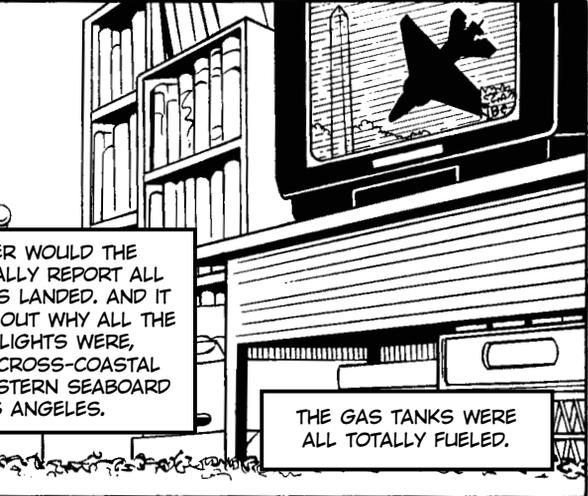
THEY FIND SUSPICIOUS PACKAGES AT NATIONAL AIRPORT. LINKS TO MUSLIM EXTREMIST OSAMA BIN LADEN ARE FORGED. ALL FOUR PLANES ARE CONFIRMED AS HIJACKED.

TWO FROM BOSTON, FROM HOME.



FOR A WHILE, THERE WERE A COUPLE OF PLANES STILL UNACCOUNTED FOR BY THE AIRLINES. PEOPLE WORRIED THAT ANOTHER STRIKE WAS IMMINENT, AND F-16'S WERE SCRAMBLED IN THE AIRSPACE OVER D.C.

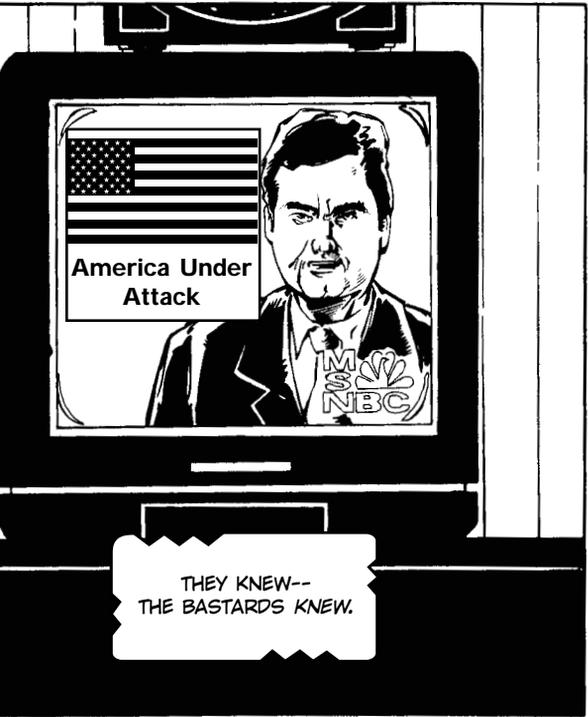
ONLY LATER WOULD THE AIRLINES FINALLY REPORT ALL STRAY PLANES LANDED. AND IT WOULD COME OUT WHY ALL THE CHOSEN FLIGHTS WERE, CURIOUSLY, CROSS-COASTAL FROM THE EASTERN SEABOARD TO LOS ANGELES.



THE GAS TANKS WERE ALL TOTALLY FUELED.



BIGGER EXPLOSION.



America Under Attack

THEY KNEW-- THE BASTARDS KNEW.



I GET QUICK WORD TO MY FRIENDS AND FAMILY THAT I AM OKAY.

IT'S THE INTERNET AGE--EVEN MY GRANDPARENTS ARE WIRED.



Subject From DC  
Date: Tue, 11 Sep 2001 11:56:18  
From: "A. David Lewis" <adl6@georgetown.edu>

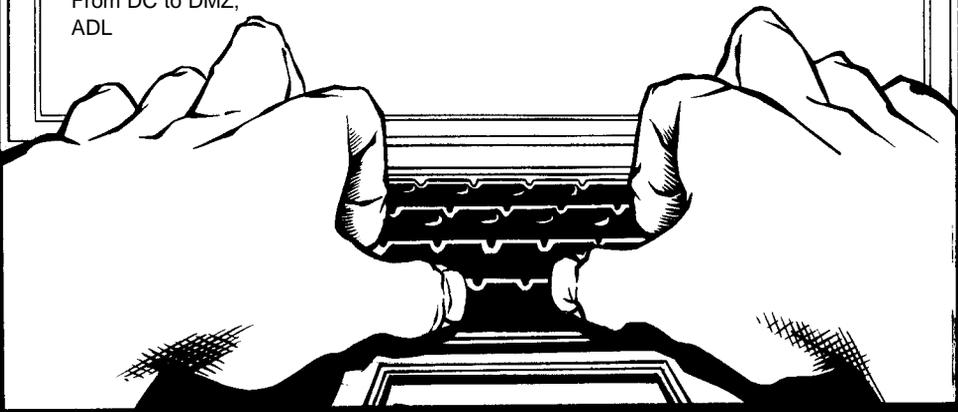
Folks,

I just wanted to write a very quick e-mail to tell you all that I am fine. I'm sure you have all been watching the news -- it's shocking. For certain, it's war...just as soon as we figure out who the enemy is. DC has gone a little crazy, with almost everything shut down, from Metro to airlines to schools, etc. The roads are packed and the phones are erratic. So, the best way may be to contact me by e-mail if you need to. Rima and I are sticking together, either at her house or at mine -- thank god we moved out of Arlington, right near the Pentagon. I hope all your friends and family in the crisis areas are all fine -- I'm told that most sections of NYC are relatively unaffected, so don't panic.

Dad, I hope you get this, stuck as you may be in Alabama.

Everybody, please know that I love you and I'm keeping safe. Check in when you each have the opportunity, ok?

From DC to DMZ,  
ADL



THE NATIONAL FINANCIAL CENTER AND SEAT OF GOVERNMENT. BOTH, EFFECTIVELY, CRIPPLED.

FOR THE FIRST TIME EVER, THE FAA SUSPENDED ALL AIR TRAFFIC ACROSS AMERICA. THE METRO IS HALTED AND TRAIN SERVICE IS INTERRUPTED. THE STREETS ARE GRIDLOCKED WITH CARS--ONE WAY GOING TO HELP, THE OTHER WAY TRYING TO ESCAPE.

MY BIKE IS THE FASTEST THING ON THE ROAD.

ALL THE BANKS HAVE BEEN CLOSED. MOST STORES, TOO. SO I WONDER IF THIS IS MY LAST CHANCE TO GET MONEY FOR A WHILE.

I GOT SOMETHING ELSE ENTIRELY-- PERHAPS A BIT MORE VALUABLE.

AN' I WAS A SECRETARY THERE FOR, WHOO, WHAT? TEN YEARS?

UH HUH.

BUT, YEAH, I JUS' WANTED TO COME QUICK CASH A CHECK, BUT UH-UH. NO CAN DO.

DO YOU MEAN THE ATMS AREN'T WORKING?

NO, THEY'RE FINE, BUT I NEEDED TO GO INSIDE, GET IT CASHED TODAY.

OH... GOTCHA.

WE DON'T SAY ANYTHING MORE, BUT WE LOOK AT EACH OTHER...WITH KINDNESS IN OUR EYES. SHE JUST GIVES A LITTLE SMILE AND A NOD. THEN LEAVES.

I SUPPOSE IF THIS HAD BEEN ANY OTHER DAY, I MIGHT HAVE FOUND TALKING WITH STRANGERS AWKWARD. OR ACTUALLY BEEN BOTHERED AND ANNOYED BY HER CHATTER. BUT NOT TODAY. IN FACT, TODAY I WELCOME IT, AND EVEN TAKE PART IN IT.

HEY.

HEY THERE.

HOW'RE YOU DOING?

OH, YOU KNOW... THROWN YOU?

YEAH. PRETTY SURREAL. EVERYBODY OKAY?

THINK SO.

YOURS?

I THINK THEY'RE OKAY.

GOOD. GOOD.

YEAH...STAY SAFE OKAY?

YOU TOO.

AND THAT WAS MY CONVERSATION WITH A WOMAN I NEVER KNEW, TALKING ABOUT THIS UNNAMED ORDEAL LIKE OLD COMRADES.

EVERYBODY NOT IN THEIR CAR IS OUT ON THE STREET. ALL DISMISSED FROM WORK OR SCHOOL, SLOWLY WALKING THEIR WAYS HOME. MAYBE THEY'RE DOING THE SAME IN NEW YORK, TRUDGING HOME THROUGH THE AVENUES.

EXCEPT THEIR STREETS ARE COVERED IN AT LEAST TWO INCHES OF SURREAL, DEBRIS-SNOW.

...ACTUALLY, IT'S PROBABLY NOT THE SAME...

I DON'T UNDERSTAND HOW THIS CAN HAPPEN. THE PENTAGON ATTACKED. THE WORLD TRADE CENTER DESTROYED. THE WORLD SO QUICKLY CHANGED. I'M A CHILD OF PEACETIME, WITH THE EXCEPTION OF DESERT STORM-- A REMOTE SKIRMISH, IN A TELEVISED LAND-- I'VE NEVER KNOWN WAR.

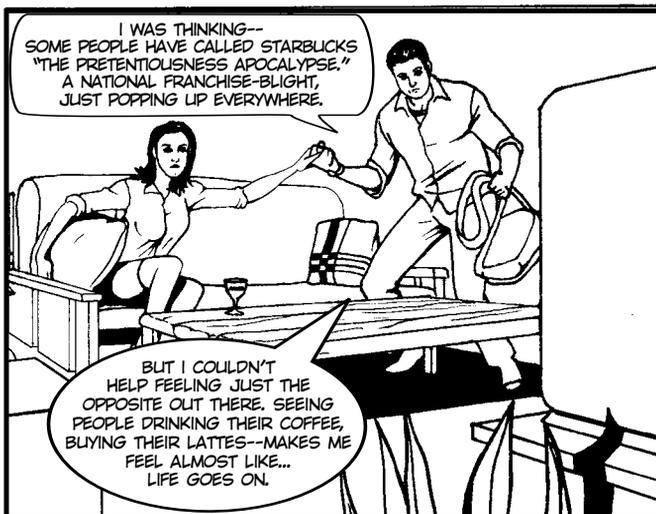
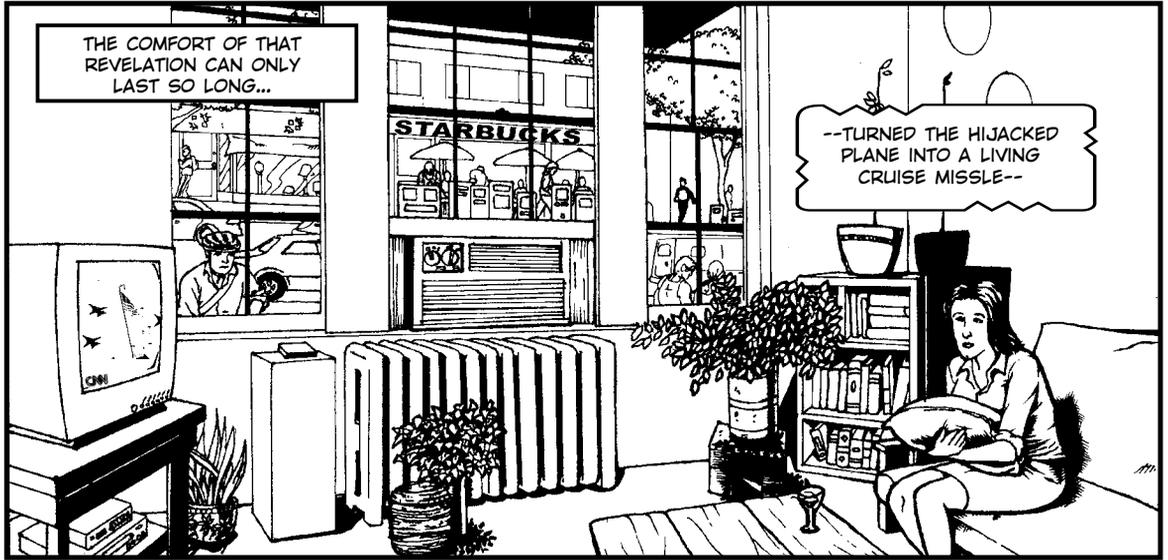
MAYBE THAT'S WHY I'M SO SURPRISED BY MY FELLOW CITIZENS. WHETHER THEY'RE AMERICANS OR ALLIES, THEY DON'T SULK OR PLOD. THEY WALK WITH ENERGY. THEY TALK WITH COMPASSION. SOME EVEN SMILE JUST TO BE ALIVE.

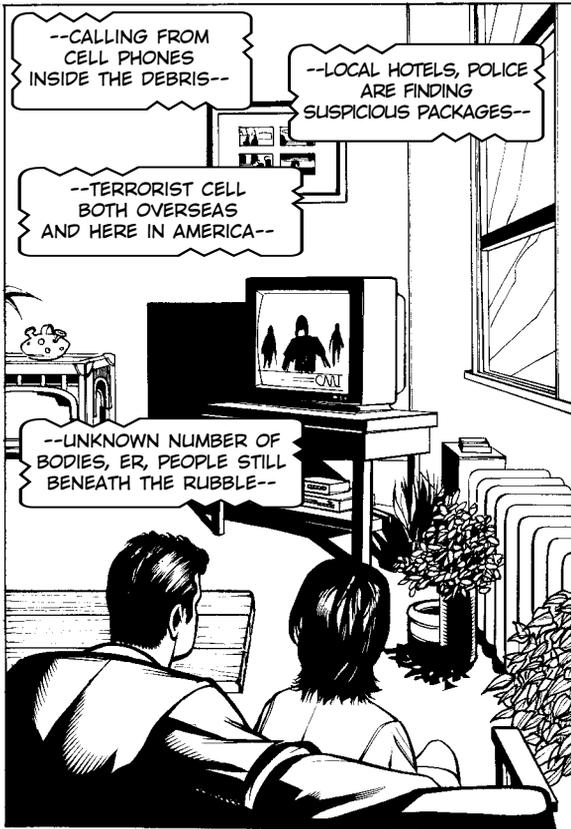
IN NEW YORK CITY, A CHILD DRAGS A STRUGGLING MAN INTO A CHURCH AND WASHES HIS EYES WITH HOLY WATER. ON THE CAPITAL STEPS, REPUBLICANS AND DEMOCRATS JOIN TOGETHER IN UNISON TO SING "GOD BLESS AMERICA."

ACROSS THE WORLD, FORMER ENEMIES COME OUT IN SUPPORT OF AMERICA TO CONDEMN THE "COWARDLY ATTACK" AND THIS "DARKEST HOUR OF TERRORIST ATROCITY."

SOMETHING HORRIBLE HAS UNITED US.





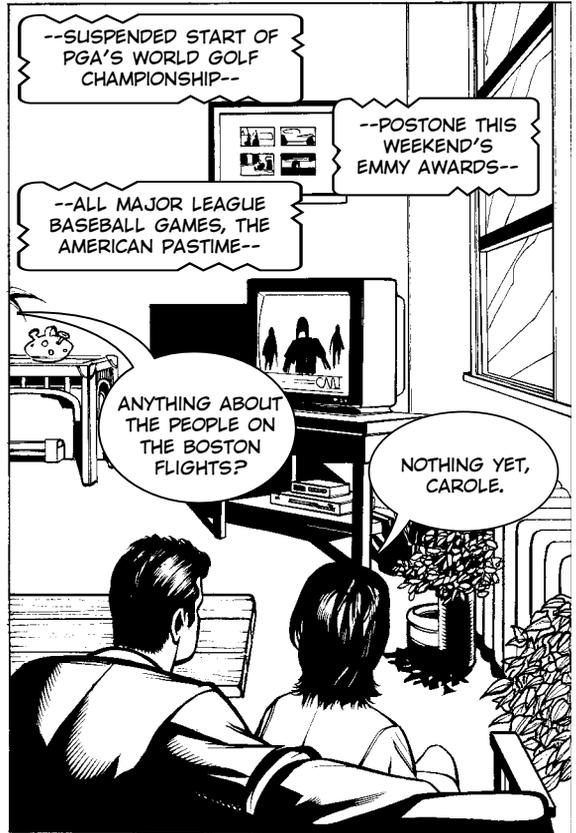


--CALLING FROM CELL PHONES INSIDE THE DEBRIS--

--LOCAL HOTELS, POLICE ARE FINDING SUSPICIOUS PACKAGES--

--TERRORIST CELL BOTH OVERSEAS AND HERE IN AMERICA--

--UNKNOWN NUMBER OF BODIES, ER, PEOPLE STILL BENEATH THE RUBBLE--



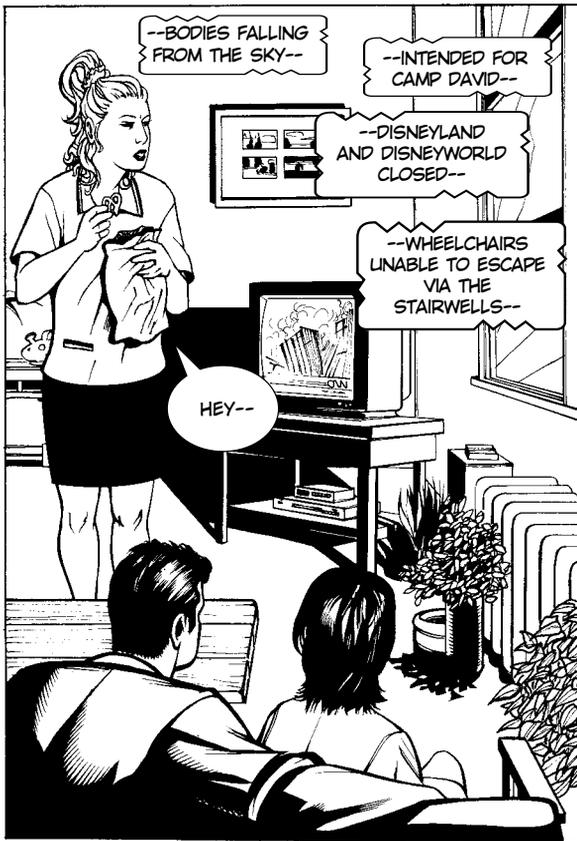
--SUSPENDED START OF PGA'S WORLD GOLF CHAMPIONSHIP--

--POSTONE THIS WEEKEND'S EMMY AWARDS--

--ALL MAJOR LEAGUE BASEBALL GAMES, THE AMERICAN PASTIME--

ANYTHING ABOUT THE PEOPLE ON THE BOSTON FLIGHTS?

NOTHING YET, CAROLE.



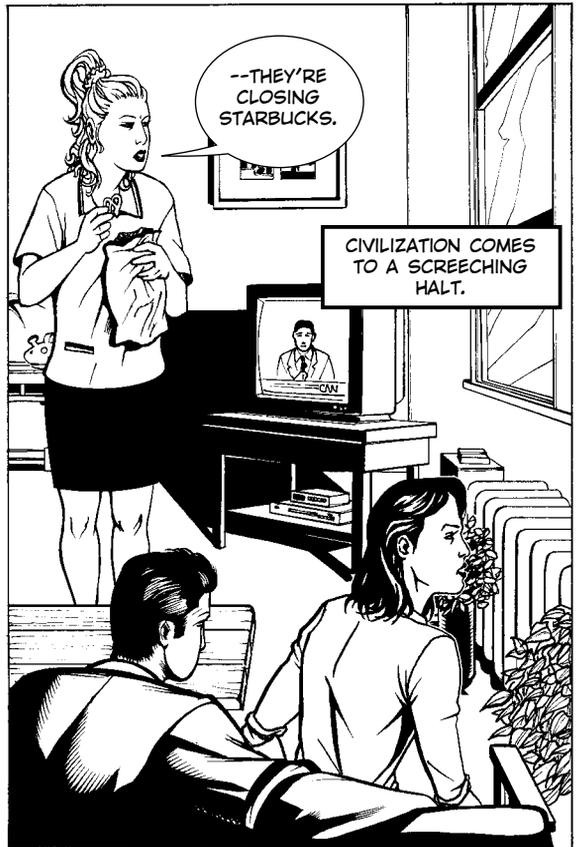
--BODIES FALLING FROM THE SKY--

--INTENDED FOR CAMP DAVID--

--DISNEYLAND AND DISNEYWORLD CLOSED--

--WHEELCHAIRS UNABLE TO ESCAPE VIA THE STAIRWELLS--

HEY--



--THEY'RE CLOSING STARBUCKS.

CIVILIZATION COMES TO A SCREECHING HALT.

THE FOLLOWING HOURS ARE A BLUR OF FRIGHTENING PICTURES AND HAZY INFORMATION.



MORE EVIDENCE HAS ARISEN FROM BOSTON, TYING THE HIJACKERS TO MIDDLE EAST ORIGINS-- WHICH HAS RIMA QUIETLY FREAKED. HATE MAIL IS ALREADY FLOODING MANY HAPLESS MUSLIM GROUPS.

BUILDING #7 OF THE WORLD TRADE CENTER ALSO FELL. AFTER THE TOWERS, IT WAS ALMOST AN AFTERTHOUGHT.

INITIAL NUMBERS HAVE STARTED TO COME IN. OVER 100 DEAD AT THE PENTAGON. AND OVER SIX PERCENT OF ALL PUBLIC SERVANTS IN NEW YORK CITY HAVE BEEN LOST. PRESIDENT BUSH ESTIMATES CASUALTIES IN THE THOUSANDS.

BUT, THERE'S HOPE -- RIMA FOUND ALL HER FRIENDS. THERE HAVE BEEN NO FURTHER STRIKES. MULTI-FAITH PRAYER VIGILS ARE ASSEMBLED ON CAMPUS. THE WORDS "SAY A PRAYER" ARE WRITTEN IN HUGE, CHALK LETTERS ON THE COURTYARD BRICKS.



YEAH, SOME HOPE... BUT NOT NEARLY ENOUGH.

KINGDOM COME

WATCHMEN

MAUS

FRO

PLA

EAF

ALMOST SIMULTANEOUSLY, NEIL, DANNY, AND I WRITE TO EACH OTHER, TALKING ABOUT DISASTER RELIEF. WE AGREE TO CONTACT SOME FRIENDS--EXPLORE WHAT COMICS CAN DO TO HELP.



I EXHAUST MY ADDRESS BOOK. AND MY MIND--THE BEST THING I CAN THINK TO DO NOW IS SLEEP.

CAN'T IMAGINE THE KIND OF DREAMS I'LL HAVE...



BUT WHO KNOWS? IT COULD BE A NEW WORLD AGAIN TOMORROW.

GOD WILLING.

"Thine alabaster cities gleam, Undimmed by human tears." -America the Beautiful